to the first element and a ferromagnetic body located adjacent the first and second switch elements;

when said members are in said close position, using a magnetic field of sufficient strength to maintain the ferromagnetic body in a first switch orientation in simultaneous contact with said first and second switch elements;

in response to relative movement of the members from said close to said open position, magnetically shifting said ferromagnetic body to a second switch orientation out of contact with said second switch element; and

generating a signal when said ferromagnetic body is shifted.

18. (Amended) The method of claim 16, said first switch element being in a generally upright orientation, with said second switch element spaced below the first switch element, said maintaining step comprising the step of maintaining the ferromagnetic body in a lower first switch orientation, said magnetic shifting step comprising the step of shifting the ferromagnetic body upwardly to said second switch orientation.

23. (Amended) A magnetic switch apparatus for detecting relative movement between first and second members from a close position where the members are adjacent, and an open position where the members are separated, said apparatus comprising a switch assembly for mounting to the first member, including a first, elongated switch element and a second switch element in spaced relationship to said first switch element, and a magnet assembly including a ferromagnetic body adjacent said first and second switch elements, said assembly operable to shift

said ferromagnetic body in a first switch orientation in simultaneous contact with said first and second switch elements when said members are in said close position, and to shift said ferromagnetic body to a second switch orientation out of contact with said second switch element in response to relative movement of the members to said open position.

Please add the following new claims:

30. A method of detecting the relative movement between first and second members from a close position where the members are adjacent, and an open position where the members are separated, said method comprising the steps of:

installing a switch assembly on said first member, said switch assembly including a first elongated switch element, a second switch element disposed in spaced relationship to the first element, and a shiftable body movable between a first position in simultaneous contact with said first and second switch elements, and a second position out of said simultaneous contact;

when said members are in said close position, using a magnetic field of sufficient strength to maintain said body in one of said first and second positions;

in response to movement of the members from said close to said open position, magnetically moving the body to the other of said first and second positions; and

generating a signal when said body is moved.

31. The method of claim 30, said magnetic moving step comprising the steps of using a magnetic field developed between said body and a first cooperable component on said first member.

32. The method of claim 31, said first component comprising a ring-shaped magnet.

33. The method of claim 30, said magnetic field of sufficient strength being developed between said body and a second cooperable component on said second member.

B1

34. The method of claim 33, said second component comprising a magnet mounted on said second member.

35. The method of claim 30, said first switch element being in a generally upright orientation, with said second switch element spaced below the first switch element, said maintaining step comprising the step of maintaining the ferromagnetic body in a lower first switch orientation, said magnetic moving step comprising the step of shifting the ferromagnetic body upwardly to said second switch orientation.

C

36. ~~The method of claim 1, said body being ferromagnetic and generally spherical.~~